

Northern PGR Network Supervisor Development Programme, 2026-27 (may be subject to change)

The Northern PGR Network is a collaboration between four ESRC-funded Doctoral Training Partnerships: NINE, NWSSDTP, SGSSS and WRDTP. We are very pleased to launch our second joint Supervisor Development programme, which is open to all PGR Supervisors in the social sciences across the network. The programme offers bitesize (one hour), engaging sessions aimed at opening up dialogues and fostering and developing reflective practice. It also seeks to facilitate peer-to-peer exchange, learning and support and is led and informed by research evidence and Supervisor experiences.

Topic: 2026/27 NPGRN Supervisor Development Programme

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 831 4143 6746

Passcode: 416244

2026/27 Programme:

1. Principles of Good Supervision

11 November 2026, 10-11am

Supervising doctoral researchers is a rewarding but complex responsibility that requires a balance of academic guidance, pastoral support, and professional development. This interactive training session explores the core principles of effective PhD supervision, drawing on best practices and current research. Whether you're new to supervision or looking to enhance your practice, this session offers practical tools and peer insights to support a positive and productive supervisory experience. This builds on last year's excellent session delivered by Jemina, but you do not need to have attended that to engage this one.

Jemina Napier, *Assoc. Director for Supervisor Engagement, SGSSS (Heriot-Watt University)*

Chair: Ryan Powell, WRDTP Director (University of Sheffield)

2. Support for International Doctoral Students

9 December 2026, 11-12pm

Here we will explore what makes international doctoral journeys distinct, the challenges facing this doctoral group as well as possible ways of optimising their unique journeys. Drawing upon our ongoing work on the hidden curriculum in doctoral education, we will highlight practical examples in which PhD supervisors can help enrich, even transform the experience of the doctoral scholars they supervise – both international and domestic alike.

Dely Elliot, *Associate Director for Student Engagement & EDI, SGSSS (University of Glasgow)*

Chair: Ryan Powell, WRDTP Director (University of Sheffield)

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3. Supervising Disabled PGRs

14 January 2027, 10-11am

This session will emphasise the benefits of working with disabled PGRs and highlight ways in which supervisors can help reduce and challenge institutional barriers. Drawing on data from our own and sector wide research, we will outline systemic barriers that cause exclusion and offer some guidance on workarounds from our own experiences. We encourage discussion and sharing of supportive supervision practices amongst workshop participants.

Bethan Evans, NWSSDTP Deputy Director (University of Liverpool)

Morag Rose (University of Liverpool)

Chair: Laura Radcliffe, NWSSDTP Director (University of Liverpool)

4. PGRs and Mental Health Support

11 February 2027, 10-11am

This session will be split into five segments and will focus on: understanding mental health distress; utilising the power threat meaning framework; an evidence-based analysis of specific PGR stressors; signposting - interventions, practices and institutional arrangements for support; and the pastoral role of the PGR supervisor.

Mick Hill, NINE DTP Deputy Director (University of Northumbria)

Chair: Nichola Wood, WRDTP Deputy Director (University of Leeds)

5. Social Class and Supervisory dynamics

11 March 2027, 12-1pm

This session seeks to foster reflective practice in the supervision and support of PGRs from working-class backgrounds. It will address the ways in which social class can shape the PGR experience and cover issues such as building confidence, imposter syndrome, negotiating academic norms, supervisory communications, and peer-to-peer networks and support. It is led by colleagues who themselves hail from working-class backgrounds. They will draw on their own experiences, as both PhD students and PhD Supervisors, in offering reflections on what has worked in terms of effective approaches and support.

Madeleine Callaghan (University of Sheffield)

Mick Hill, NINE DTP Deputy Director (University of Northumbria)

Chair: Abi Tazzyman, WRDTP (University of Sheffield)

6. The lifecycle of a PhD: Supervisor reflections

15 April 2027, 10-11am

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The expectations and lifecycle of a typical social science PhD have changed significantly in recent years. This session will trace through the contemporary social sciences Doctoral lifecycle and will surface common "pinch points". It will discuss approaches to supporting PGRs through these challenging periods and reflect on practical supervision strategies.

Alisha Ali and Nicola Palmer (*Sheffield Hallam University*)

Chair: TBC

7. Supporting doctoral students' writing development

20 May 2027, 10-11am

This session will emphasise the critical role of supervisors in the development of their doctoral students' writing. Drawing on writing research and experience, I will share strategies supervisors can use to help doctoral students become confident writers and produce the thesis. Participants will also be encouraged to share their own strategies for supporting their supervisees' writing development.

Lisa McGrath (*Sheffield Hallam University*)

Chair: TBC

8. Careers and supporting post-PhD transitions

10 June 2027, 10-11am

This session will explore how supervisors can support doctoral researchers as they prepare for life beyond the PhD. Drawing on practical examples and reflective discussion, participants will consider career conversations, professional development, and the opportunities and challenges of different post-PhD pathways. It will offer approaches for building confidence, recognising individual aspirations and facilitating constructive, timely support throughout the doctoral journey.

Naomi Tyrrell (naomityrrell.com)

Chair: Sahdia Parveen, WRDTP (University of Bradford)

To register for the programme please [complete this short google form](#).

Once registered you will receive invites to the sessions 2 weeks prior to the event. There is no expectation that Supervisors will attend every session.